

Good morning distinguished members of Judiciary Committee:

My name is Barbara Fair and I am a West Haven resident. I am here in strong support of SB5390 which proposes the repeal of Ct General Statute 18-85(b) (c). In reading the statute my initial reaction is where is the moral integrity in passing a law that places an undue burden on people who have been involuntarily held in the custody of the state enduring all kinds of inhumanities, mental distress and chronic disease. Some have even lost their lives due to negligence on the part of the department yet were charged for their incarceration. Liens placed on these people and/or their estate for up to 20 years after they are released is simply shameful. After laws were passed creating mass incarceration it became too costly to cage so many people and so laws like Ct General Statutes 18-85 were passed to recoup the costs of maintaining a skyrocketing correctional system. Ct Statute 18-85 (b,c) allows for liens to be placed on individuals and their estates charging them for "room and board", medical and mental health services, programming, food, restitution to victims, civil judgments, legal fees, child support and administrative charges for things such as probate and legal fees. Individuals who are released from jails and prisons carry the burden of overcoming the inhumanities and degradation associated with their carceral experience, adverse mental and physical health effects, possible loss of family connection, housing, employment and opportunities for successful reentry. To add an additional burden is unconscionable. Again, where is the moral integrity in passing these laws? Incarcerated people are the state's cheap labor force. Reportedly, they work all day for less than \$3 a day providing products to local, state and federal municipalities including the department itself. They purchase basic needs including food products through commissary. Medical visits require copays. This "pay to stay" policy should be classified under RICO laws. First of all, who gets to decide "fee to stay" charges? Who scrutinizes how they are calculated? How in the world can Ct Department of Corrections charge \$224 a day for "accommodations" more than a hotel with security, maid service, phone, privacy and amenities? It's time to repeal these evil policies with all its intended consequences. Do you think if the correctional system were 71% white many of these policies would have passed? As always these disrespectful and harmful laws heavily and negatively impact African American and Latinos. It's legalized discrimination and continuing racial subjugation at its best. It's time for transformative changes in Ct systems that continue to oppress marginalized communities across this very segregated state. For that reason and more I highly support the passage of SB5390 repealing Ct Statute 18-85 (b,c). Being deprived of one's liberty and all that comes with it should be enough punishment for those sentenced to jail or prison. To then be forced to pay for that experience is triple jeopardy. First people lose their liberty, dehumanized and used for cheap labor force and then released with the "scarlet letter" limiting opportunities and to add gasoline to the fire those same individuals carry the burden of being charged for it for up to 20 years after release from the belly of the beast. Is there any integrity within the system of justice in Ct? Do the right thing. Begin to repeal laws passed with very intentional negative outcomes. Begin by passage of SB5390. Thank you for your time and moral sense of duty.

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